

Portland Elementary School

Portland Elementary School, one of 37 elementary schools in Springfield, Missouri, is a neighborhood Title I school with a population of 213 children and a free and reduced lunch rate of 66.9% (January, 2006). Portland was built in 1952 as the Springfield population continued growing to the south.

The mission of Portland Elementary is to support the development of students to become inquisitive, self-regulated lifelong learners. Over the past four years, the Portland community has collaborated to focus on the mission. The staff continues to develop a learning environment which is constantly examining and improving their craft. They continuously examine their practice to better meet the individual needs of all students. Portland Elementary is a collaborative community, seeking input and support from parents, students, teachers, and community members. Portland's volunteer program has grown by 60% over the past four years.

Portland Elementary is a Partnership in Comprehensive Literacy (PICL) model school. This on-going job-embedded professional development model's goal is to develop a seamless transition across school programs, curriculum approaches, and assessment systems to improve student achievement. This framework for literacy uses a workshop approach for meeting the needs of all students. The strength of Portland's partnership in Comprehensive Literacy (PICL) model resides in the school's ability to systematically coordinate the features of the model and facilitate continuous school improvement by reviewing instructional practices and student performance. Portland's workshop approach focuses on meeting the needs of all students, coaching and assisting teachers in taking on new learning, having and expressing high standards for all students, and monitoring student progress with formal and informal assessments along the way, reteaching groups or conferencing with individual students to ensure that all children reach their highest potential.

PICL uses coaching and mentoring scaffolding techniques to assist teachers in supporting students as they take on new learning, including a gradual release model for assuming responsibility. Portland has high standards for all students based on state, national, and professional standards with district benchmarks administered to ensure all children reach their highest potential. High student engagement is a goal in every classroom. Students are supported to become self-regulated learners. Many classrooms integrate cooperative learning into instruction. In a cooperative learning environment, students learn how to work with others, interact socially with peers, share responsibilities while learning, and become accountable for their own learning. Many classroom teachers integrate interdisciplinary instruction into their relevance of subject matter to the real world.

Portland Elementary is actively involved in continuous quality improvement, routinely examining our goal of continued improvement in student achievement (*see table below*).

MAP	Third Grade		Fourth Grade		Fifth Grade	
Year	ComArts Proficient or Advanced	Math Proficient or Advanced	ComArts Proficient or Advanced	Math Proficient or Advanced	ComArts Proficient or Advanced	Math Proficient or Advanced
2004	30.0%	NA	NA	32.4%	NA	NA
2005	38.7%	NA	NA	34.4%	NA	NA
2006	51.6%	51.6%	39.0%	42.5%	55.35%	55.3%